

Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 - 8 (canceled).

Claim 9 (new). An electromagnetic linear drive, comprising:

a stator having a surface; and

an armature having a surface and being moved relative to said stator, said stator and said armature defining an air gap there-between at least during any relative movement between said surface of said armature and said surface of said stator, said air gap being disposed at least partially obliquely with respect to a direction of the relative movement.

Claim 10 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 9, wherein said surface of said armature and said surface of said stator are aligned parallel to one another.

Claim 11 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 9, wherein said surface of said stator and said surface of said armature each have surface elements with surface normals that differ from one another.

Claim 12 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 11, wherein said surface elements have different gradients with respect to the direction of the relative movement of said stator and said armature.

Claim 13 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 9, wherein said surface of said armature and said surface of said stator are stepped surfaces having steps, said steps are bounded by interpolated envelope surfaces which are disposed obliquely with respect to the direction of the relative movement.

Claim 14 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 13, wherein said steps have first sections on which said surfaces of said stator and said armature touch one another when said stator and said armature are in a given position with respect to one another.

Claim 15 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 14, wherein said steps have second sections, on which an intermediate space is formed between said surfaces of said stator and said armature when said stator and said armature are in the given position with respect to one another.

Claim 16 (new). The electromagnetic linear drive according to claim 14, wherein said first sections are surfaces which are disposed substantially at right angles to the direction of the relative movement.